



City of Seattle

Gregory J. Nickels, Mayor

Department of Planning and Development

D. M. Sugimura, Director

**CITY OF SEATTLE
ANALYSIS AND DECISION OF THE DIRECTOR
OF THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT**

Application Number: 3004230

Applicant Name: Olivia Voigts, for Clear Channel Outdoor

Address of Proposal: 1300 West Nickerson Street

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED ACTION

Master Use Permit to establish use for the future construction of a double-faced, externally illuminated billboard advertising sign with a 14 foot by 48 foot display face and an overall height of 45 feet. The sign will be oriented towards the north and south adjacent to 15th Avenue West.

The following approval is required:

SEPA – Environmental Determination – Chapter 25.05, Seattle Municipal Code.

SEPA DETERMINATION: ☐ Exempt ☒ DNS ☐ MDNS ☐ EIS
 ☐ DNS with conditions
 ☐ DNS involving non-exempt grading or demolition,
 or involving another agency with jurisdiction.

BACKGROUND DATA

Site Visit: March 28, 2006

Zoning: Industrial Buffer (IB U/45)

Uses on Site: One commercial warehouse building.

Site and Vicinity Description

The proposal site is an approximately 2.16 acre lot located north of the intersection of West Nickerson and 15th Avenue West. The subject lot and block are zoned Industrial Buffer with a 45 foot height limit (IB U/45). The subject property is within an environmentally critical area that is liquefaction prone and has 40% steep slopes adjacent to the south; thus, development is subject to the provisions of Chapter 25.09 of the Seattle Municipal Code.

The site and area south of West Nickerson Street is highly industrialized and is an automobile- and truck-oriented area, with railroad tracks adjacent to the north. The subject lot is located approximately 10-15 feet below the street level of West Nickerson Street to the south, with trees and vegetation on the steep slope between the street and the subject site. The proposal site contains a four-story warehouse building, located on the eastern portion of the lot. The southwestern portion of the lot, where the proposed billboard will be located, is paved with asphalt for parking.

Area Development

The lot and surrounding area to the west, north, and east is zoned for industrial uses and developed consistent with the zoning designation and allowed uses. The area south of the subject site is zoned Commercial 2 (C-2) and there is a mixed use building on the southern side of West Nickerson which overlooks the site.

Proposal Description

The applicant proposes to build and maintain one billboard advertising sign with a double-faced 14-foot by 48-foot display surface, facing in a north and south direction adjacent to 15th Avenue West. The display surface will be externally lit, and the overall height of the structure will be 45 feet above grade.

Public Comments

The comment period for this proposal ended on April 12, 2006. During this period, no written comment letters related to this project were received.

ANALYSIS - SEPA

Environmental review resulting in a Threshold Determination is required pursuant to the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA), WAC 197-11, and the Seattle SEPA Ordinance (Seattle Municipal Code Chapter 25.05). The initial disclosure of the potential impacts from this project was made in the environmental checklist submitted by the applicant dated February 24, 2006. The information in the checklist, project plans, and the experience of the lead agency with review of similar projects form the basis for this analysis and decision.

The SEPA Overview Policy (SMC 25.05.665 D) clarifies the relationship between codes, policies, and environmental review. Specific policies for each element of the environment, certain neighborhood plans, and other policies explicitly referenced may serve as the basis for exercising substantive SEPA authority.

The Overview Policy states, in part: *"Where City regulations have been adopted to address an environmental impact, it shall be presumed that such regulations are adequate to achieve sufficient mitigation,"* subject to some limitations. Under certain limitations or circumstances (SMC 25.05.665 D 1-7), mitigation can be considered. A more detailed discussion of some of the potential impacts from this proposal follows.

Short-term Impacts

The following temporary or construction-related impacts are expected: decreased air quality due to suspended particulate from building activities and hydrocarbon emissions from construction vehicles and equipment; increased traffic and demand for parking from construction equipment and personnel; increased noise; and consumption of renewable and non-renewable resources. Due to the short term and minor nature of construction impact associated with the construction of the sign, no mitigation is warranted by SEPA policies.

Long-term Impacts

Long-term or use-related impacts include minor ongoing use of electricity to light the sign face, illumination of the sign face and increased traffic, noise, and vehicular emissions from the monthly copy posting and routine maintenance visits. Since the site is adjacent to two principal arterials, both with significant traffic volumes in an area of industrial zoning and uses, and the surrounding uses generate light and noise, these impacts are anticipated to be minor. There will likely be some view obstruction for those traveling north and south on 15th Avenue West and also some obstruction of the view north from West Nickerson Street, however, this will still be relatively insignificant as far as visual impact. Therefore, no mitigation is warranted pursuant to SEPA policies.

The Sign Code (SMC 23.55) regulates the location, size, and other characteristics of off-premise signs and provides sufficient mitigation for the following impacts:

Cumulative Impacts

The revised Seattle Sign Ordinance has reduced the number of billboard advertising signs permitted in a given area of the City by modification of the sign dispersion standards. Sign dispersion standards limit the number of signs by requiring a minimum separation between signs and permitting a maximum number of signs in a one-half mile distance. According to SMC 23.55.014.E, the number of advertising or off-premise sign faces is limited to two signs within 300 lineal feet with a minimum separation of 100 feet between sign structures. The dispersion requirements and zoning standards were reviewed by the DPD sign inspector and the proposed sign has been found to show compliance with the applicable requirements; therefore, no further mitigation pursuant to SEPA is warranted.

Light and Glare

The Sign Code requires that light sources be shielded so that direct light is not visible on adjacent properties (SMC 23.55.016) and also limits fluorescent lighting of off-premise advertising signs to one watt per square foot of sign area (SMC 23.55.014.E). Surrounding land uses are industrial and commercial in nature and generate their own traffic, noise, and light. The nearby residences to the south would be minimally impacted by the proposed illumination. Light and glare impacts are sufficiently mitigated by the Sign Code lighting standards and the applicant's proposal to limit the hours of illumination (dusk to midnight and 6:00 a.m. to dawn). Thus, no additional light and glare mitigation measures are necessary.

DECISION – SEPA

This decision was made after review by the responsible official on behalf of the lead agency, of a completed environmental checklist and other information on file with the responsible department. This constitutes the Threshold Determination and form. The intent of this declaration is to satisfy the requirements of the State Environmental Policy Act (RCW 43.21C), including the requirement to inform the public agency decisions pursuant to SEPA.

☒ Determination of Non-Significance. This proposal has been determined to not have a significant adverse impact upon the environment. An EIS is not required under RCW 43.21C.030 2C.

☐ Determination of Significance. This proposal has or may have a significant adverse impact upon the environment. An EIS is required under RCW 43.21C.030 2C.

CONDITIONS – SEPA

None.

Signature: (signature on file)
Janet Hyde-Wright, Land Use Planner
Department of Planning and Development

Date: May 25, 2006